

Message Text

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17

ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 EB-07

AID-05 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

SAM-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /119 W
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R 031525Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MASERU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5573

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 0219

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PORC, PFOR, LT, US

SUBJECT: MULTILATSRAL AFFAIRS - LESOTHO

REF: (A) STATE 37591, (B) MASERU 0039

FOLLOWING REPLIES ARE KEYED TO PARA 7 REFTEL A:

A. LESOTHO'S ATTITUDE TOWARD MANY MULTILATERAL ISSUES IS DETERMINED BY A CALCULATION OF ITS NATIONAL INTERESTS. ITS OVERRIDING NATIONAL INTEREST IS TO BUILD BRIDGES ACROSS SOUTH AFRICA IN ORDER TO ENLARGE AND DIVERSIFY FRIENDSHIPS AND SOURCES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IN THE HOPE OF MAKING ITSELF MORE POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY INDEPENDENT OF THAT COUNTRY. AT THE SAME TIME, LESOTHO REALIZES THE NECESSITY OF COEXISTING AND COOPERATING TO AN EXTENT WITH SOUTH AFRICA AS IT IS PRESENTLY GOVERNED WHILE WORKING PEACEFULLY FOR MAJORITY RULE THERE. LESOTHO SEEKS TO MAINTAIN CLOSE TIES WITH AND AID FROM MAJOR WESTERN COUNTRIES, TO BROADEN ITS LIST OF DONORS TO INCLUDE ARAB, MIDDLE-EASTERN, AND COMMUNIST COUNTRIES, AND TO SUPPORT OAU AND OTHER NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES ON ISSUES ON WHICH THOSE GROUPINGS CALL FOR SOLIDARITY. IN ADOPTING POSITIONS ON MULTILATERAL

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ISSUES NOT OF DIRECT CONCERN TO ITSELF, LESOTHO SEEKS TO BALANCE

THESE CONFLICTING NATIONAL INTERESTS AND LOYALTIES AND TENDS TO REACH PRAGMATIC, NON-IDEOLOGICAL DECISIONS. THUS ON ISSUES SUCH AS KOREA, PUERTO RICO, AND (IN THE PAST) SOUTHEAST ASIA, THE BALANCE USUALLY HAS COME DOWN IN FAVOR OF THE U.S. POSITIONS. ON AFRICAN ISSUES, ESPECIALLY SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES, HOWEVER, LESOTHO USUALLY FOLLOWS OAU POSITIONS, BOTH AS A MATTER OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLE AND OAU SOLIDARITY. THIS PATTERN IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO PREVAIL. THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS THAT LESOTHO WILL TAKE INITIATIVES OR PUT FORWARD CANDIDATES FOR POSITIONS IN MULTILATERAL BODIES.

B. LESOTHO IS SUBJECT TO INFLUENCE FROM OAU COUNTRIES, AID DONORS, POTENTIAL AID DONORS, AND SOUTH AFRICA. ITS FINAL POSITION ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES IS LIKELY TO BE DETERMINED BY FACTORS MENTIONED IN PARA A ABOVE. IT HAS SHOWN A NOTABLE ABILITY TO RESIST INFLUENCE FROM CERTAIN QUARTERS (ARAB AND OAU COUNTRIES, FOR EXAMPLE, IN CONNECTION WITH MAINTAINING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL) WHENEVER ITS READING OF ITS OWN NATIONAL INTEREST DICTATES. LESOTHO DOES NOT ASPIRE TO INFLUENCE OTHER NATIONS OR GROUPS ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES.

C. GOL DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS ARE USUALLY INSTRUCTED ON IMPORTANT ISSUES, AND CAN BE RELIED ON TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS. THIS IS ESPECIALLY SO AT PRESENT, WITH DAVID NOTO IN NEW YORK, TEBHO MASHOLOGU IN WASHINGTON, AND C. D. MOLAPO AS MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THESE MEN ARE NOT FREE-WHEELING. ON NON-CONTENTIOUS ISSUES OF LESS IMPORTANCE, DELEGATIONS ARE USUALLY GIVEN MORE DISCRETION AND OFTEN GO ALONG WITH OAU POSITIONS. ONCE INSTRUCTIONS ARE GIVEN AND DELEGATIONS ARE IN THE FIELD, EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN IT IS DIFFICULT TO GET INSTRUCTIONS CHANGED, BECAUSE OF LACK OF ADEQUATE COMMUNICATIONS AND GOL RELUCTANCE TO CHANGE POSITIONS ONCE THEY ARE ADOPTED. THIS POINTS UP IMPORTANCE OF IDENTIFYING MULTILATERAL ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO U.S. AND MAKING DEMARCHES EARLY ON IN DECISION MAKING PROCESS.

D. GENERALLY SPEAKING, GOL HEADS OF DELEGATIONS DO NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT INDEPENDENT POLITICAL SUPPORT TO ENABLE THEM TO RESIST GOVERNMENT INSTRUCTIONS. MOST HEADS OF DELEGATIONS ARE CIVIL SERVANTS. NOTABLE EXCEPTION IS MINISTER FINANCE E. R. SEKHONYANA, WHO HAS INDEPENDENT POLITICAL SUPPORT AND, BECAUSE OF HIS EXPERTISE, IS OFTEN GIVEN WIDE DISCRETION IN HEADING FINANCIAL DELEGATIONS.

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HOWEVER, HE IS BY NO MEANS A MAVERICK AND, OTHER THINGS BEING EQUAL, WOULD ABIDE BY GOL INSTRUCTIONS.

E. GOL IS MORE THAN NORMALLY RECEPTIVE TO U.S. REPRESENTATIONS ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES AND APPEARS TO HAVE FULLY ACCEPTED THAT SUCH ISSUES ARE A NORMAL PART OF BILATERAL RELATIONS. IT ALSO EXPECTS THAT ITS RESPONSIVENESS TO U.S. INTERESTS WILL BE RECIPROCATED AND THAT U.S. WILL GIVE GREATER SYMPATHY TO ITS ASSISTANCE NEEDS (SEE

REF B). GOL DOES NOT NORMALLY SOLICIT U.S. SUPPORT ON SPECIFIC
MULTILATERAL ISSUES THROUGH EMBASSY, BUT GOL OFFICIALS, INCLUDING
PRIME MINISTER, HAVE EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT OVER U.S. RELUCTANCE
TO TAKE STRONGER STANDS ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES.
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